

protecting our freedoms. They've done a job well done.

In addition, I rise today to honor the Unilever National Parks Congressional Internship program in partnership with the Student Conservation Association.

For 11 years, this program has engaged the next generation of conservation leaders by facilitating internships in national parks and on Capitol Hill for 63 top-notch young professionals. The program has served as an important stepping stone in their public policy and conservation careers.

It is with great sadness that this program has come to an end; but I have had the privilege, along with my colleagues, in working with seven of the Unilever congressional interns in my office.

I commend the Unilever and Student Conservation Association for sponsoring such an innovative program, and I thank all of the interns for their dedication and service. I wish them all the best in their future careers as they add value to the fabric of our Nation.

□ 1230

REPUBLICAN OPPOSITION TO PROPOSED TAX CUT

(Ms. CLARKE of New York asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. CLARKE of New York. Mr. Speaker, here we go again. For the third time this calendar year, we are facing the real likelihood of a government shutdown. And why? Because, Mr. Speaker, of all things, Republican opposition to a tax cut proposal. The Republican majority, which has spent the last 49 weeks of the American people's time protecting tax cuts for millionaires, multimillionaires, and billionaires, does not want to extend the same courtesy to the struggling middle class.

It's a shame, Mr. Speaker, that the people's House cannot agree to pass commonsense legislation that benefits the majority of the American people without including poison pills that ensure the air we breathe is clean, our water is safe to drink, and our seniors have access to quality health care.

Unfortunately, this should not come as a surprise to the American people who have watched the Republican-led 112th Congress unleash an all-out assault on our middle class and aspiring middle class and the most vulnerable amongst us.

Mr. Speaker, during these tough times, we cannot afford to pass partisan legislation that toys with and diminishes the livelihoods of the American people, that harms our economic recovery efforts, and removes environmental safeguards. We must put politics aside, pass commonsense legislation that helps the American people, and not use them as political bargaining chips.

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome home America's service-

women and -men and thank you for your service to our Nation.

EDUCATION

(Mrs. DAVIS of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Speaker, first, I certainly want to thank our troops and their families for their sacrifice as we exit from Iraq.

It is my honor now to continue to bring the voices of my constituents to this floor. And the following is from Howard Tenenbaum. He is a science teacher in La Jolla, and I believe his class is watching today. He sent me his opinion on education:

"Weighing a pig every day doesn't get you a fatter pig. And annual testing of all students in all subject areas, without it impacting their grade, has not resulted in smarter students. It has made our students lose their intrinsic desire to learn and added an expensive layer of bureaucracy to an already administratively top-heavy system.

"This is especially true for science education. It is clear that the current accountability system has failed. Our students, parents, and their teachers are being held hostage to this failed system. When was the last time you were forced to take an exam, asked to do your 'best,' and knew that the result wouldn't affect how you were being evaluated?"

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Howard for bringing to the House his thoughts on education and this question to our floor.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, December 15, 2011.

Hon. JOHN A. BOEHNER,
The Speaker, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on December 15, 2011 at 9:22 a.m.:

That the Senate passed with an amendment H.R. 1892.

That the Senate passed with amendments H.R. 515.

Appointments:
National Advisory Committee on Institutional Quality and Integrity.

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 1:15 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 33 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess until 1:15 p.m.

□ 1315

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. WESTMORELAND) at 1 o'clock and 15 minutes p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on the motion to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote incurs objection under clause 6 of rule XX.

Any record vote on the postponed question will be taken later.

WELFARE INTEGRITY AND DATA IMPROVEMENT ACT

Mr. PAULSEN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3659) to reauthorize the program of block grants to States for temporary assistance for needy families through fiscal year 2012, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3659

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Welfare Integrity and Data Improvement Act".

SEC. 2. TABLE OF CONTENTS.

The table of contents of this Act is as follows:

- Sec. 1. Short title.
- Sec. 2. Table of contents.
- Sec. 3. Extension of program.
- Sec. 4. Data standardization.
- Sec. 5. Spending policies for assistance under State TANF programs.
- Sec. 6. Technical corrections.

SEC. 3. EXTENSION OF PROGRAM.

(a) FAMILY ASSISTANCE GRANTS.—Section 403(a)(1) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 603(a)(1)) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (A), by striking "each of fiscal years 1996" and all that follows through "2003" and inserting "fiscal year 2012";

(2) in subparagraph (B)—

(A) by inserting "(as in effect just before the enactment of the Welfare Integrity and Data Improvement Act)" after "this paragraph" the 1st place it appears; and

(B) by inserting "(as so in effect)" after "this paragraph" the 2nd place it appears; and

(3) in subparagraph (C), by striking "2003" and inserting "2012".

(b) HEALTHY MARRIAGE PROMOTION AND RESPONSIBLE FATHERHOOD GRANTS.—Section 403(a)(2)(D) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 603(a)(2)(D)) is amended by striking "2011" and inserting "2012".

(c) MAINTENANCE OF EFFORT REQUIREMENT.—Section 409(a)(7) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 609(a)(7)) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (A), by striking "fiscal year" and all that follows through "2013" and inserting "a fiscal year"; and

(2) in subparagraph (B)(ii)—

(A) by striking "for fiscal years 1997 through 2012,"; and